



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice and Special Education Research and Development Center Program

AGENCY: Institute of Education Sciences, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2023 for the Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice and Special Education Research and Development (R&D) Center Grant Programs, Assistance Listing Numbers (ALNs) 84.305N and 84.324C. This notice relates to the approved information collection under OMB control number 4040-0001.

DATES: The dates when applications are available and the deadlines for transmittal of applications invited under this notice are indicated in the chart at the end of this notice and in the Requests for Applications (RFAs) that are posted at the following website:

<https://ies.ed.gov/funding>.

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on

December 27, 2021 (86 FR 73264) and available at www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-27979. Please note that these Common Instructions supersede the version published on February 13, 2019, and, in part, describe the transition from the requirement to register in SAM.gov a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to the implementation of the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). More information on the phase-out of DUNS numbers is available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/fofo/docs/unique-entity-identifier-transition-fact-sheet.pdf>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The contact person associated with a particular research competition is listed in the chart at the end of this notice, as well as in the relevant RFA and application package.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability and wish to access telecommunications relay services, please dial 7-1-1.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Programs:

Through the National Center for Education Research (NCER), the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) provides support for programs of research in areas of demonstrated national need. The IES research grant programs are designed to provide interested individuals and the general

public with reliable and valid information about education practices that support learning and improve academic achievement and access to education opportunities for all learners.

Through the Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice grant program, NCER focuses resources and attention on specific education problems or issues that are a high priority for the Nation. NCER also establishes both a structure and process for researchers who are working on these issues to share ideas, build new knowledge, and strengthen their research and dissemination capacity. Through this program, NCER seeks to establish a new Career and Technical Education Research Network and seeks to expand the Digital Learning Platforms Network, also known as SEERNet (<https://www.seernet.org>), which was originally established in FY 2021. Additional information about the Career and Technical Education Research Network topic is available in the notice inviting applications under the Lead of a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Network: Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice published elsewhere in this issue of the *Federal Register*.

Within IES, the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSE) supports research to expand knowledge and understanding of the needs of infants, toddlers, and youth

with disabilities to improve the developmental, education, and transition outcomes of such individuals.

Through NCSEER, IES invests in Special Education Research and Development Centers (R&D Centers) that contribute to the body of special education knowledge in the United States by engaging in research, development, evaluation, and national leadership activities aimed at improving the education system and, ultimately, student achievement.

Through this program, NCSEER seeks to establish a new R&D Center on Supporting Students with Disabilities in Postsecondary Education.

Competitions in This Notice: IES is announcing two research competitions:

NCER is announcing one competition in research networks focused on critical problems of policy and practice.

NCSEER is announcing one competition in special education research and development centers.

NCER Competition

The Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice Competition (ALN 84.305N).

Under this competition, NCER will consider only applications that address one of the following topics:

- Career and Technical Education Research Network, which includes a single Network Lead in FY23. (The CTE

Network will conduct research on CTE through projects funded by other IES grant competitions). For additional information about this topic, please see the notice inviting applications for the Lead of a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Network: Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice published elsewhere in this issue of the *Federal Register*.

- Digital Learning Platforms Network, which includes:
 - o Research Teams

NCSER Competition

The Special Education Research and Development Center Competition (ALN 84.324C). Under this competition, NCSER will consider only applications that address the following topic:

- Research Center on Supporting Students with Disabilities in Postsecondary Education.

Exemption from Proposed Rulemaking: Under section 191 of the Education Sciences Reform Act, 20 U.S.C. 9581, IES is not subject to section 437(d) of the General Education Provisions Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232(d), and is therefore not required to offer interested parties the opportunity to comment on priorities, selection criteria, definitions, and requirements.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 9501 et seq.

Note: Projects will be awarded and must be operated in a manner consistent with the nondiscrimination requirements contained in Federal civil rights laws.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 77, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. In addition, the regulations in 34 CFR part 75 are applicable, except for the provisions in 34 CFR 75.100, 75.101(b), 75.102, 75.103, 75.105, 75.109(a), 75.200, 75.201, 75.209, 75.210, 75.211, 75.217(a)-(c), 75.219, 75.220, 75.221, 75.222, 75.230, 75.250(a), and 75.708. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions of higher education only.

Note: The open licensing requirement in 2 CFR 3474.20 does not apply to these competitions.

II. Award Information

Types of Awards: Discretionary grants and cooperative agreements.

Fiscal Information: Although Congress has not yet enacted an appropriation for FY 2023, IES is inviting applications for these competitions now so that applicants can have adequate time to prepare their applications. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action.

Estimated Range of Awards: See chart at the end of this notice. The size of the awards will depend on the scope of the projects proposed.

Estimated Number of Awards: The number of awards made under each competition will depend on the quality of the applications received for that competition, the availability of funds, and the following limits on awards for the Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice competition and the Special Education Research and Development Center competition.

IES may waive any of the following limits on awards for the Digital Learning Network Research Teams topic within the Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice and the Special Education Research and Development Center competitions in the special case that the peer review process results in a tie between two or more grant applications, making it impossible to adhere to the limits without funding only some of the

equally ranked applications. In that case, IES may make a larger number of awards to include all applications of the same rank.

For the Digital Learning Platforms Network, we intend to fund up to 10 grants for Research Teams.

For the Special Education Research and Development Center competition, we intend to fund up to one grant for the Postsecondary Center.

Should funding be available, we may consider making additional awards to high-quality applications that remain unfunded after these maximum limits are met. Contingent on the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2024 from the list of highly rated unfunded applications submitted in response to the FY 2023 competition announcement.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: See chart at the end of this notice.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: Applicants that have the ability and capacity to conduct scientifically valid research are eligible to apply. Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to, nonprofit and for-profit organizations and public and private agencies and institutions of higher education, such as colleges and universities.

2. a. Cost Sharing or Matching: These programs do not require cost sharing or matching.

b. Indirect Cost Rate Information: This program uses an unrestricted indirect cost rate. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html.

c. Administrative Cost Limitation: This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary to conform to Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform Guidance.

3. Subgrantees: Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c) a grantee under the NCER Research Networks and NCSE R&D Center competitions may award subgrants--to directly carry out project activities described in its application--to the following types of entities: nonprofit and for-profit organizations and public and private agencies and institutions of higher education. The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Application Submission Instructions: Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant

Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on December 27, 2021 (86 FR 73264) and available at www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-27979, which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application. Please note that these Common Instructions supersede the version published on February 13, 2019, and, in part, describe the transition from the requirement to register in SAM.gov a DUNS number to the implementation of the UEI. More information on the phase-out of DUNS numbers is available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ofo/docs/unique-entity-identifier-transition-fact-sheet.pdf>.

2. Other Information: Information regarding program and application requirements for the competitions will be contained in the NCER and NCSEER RFAs, which will be available on the IES website at:

<https://ies.ed.gov/funding/>. The Special Education Research and Development Center Competition (ALN 84.324C) will be posted on or before September 30, 2022. The Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice Competition (ALN 84.305N) will be posted on or before October 20, 2022. The dates on which the application packages for these competitions will be available are indicated in the chart at the end of this notice. Application submission information is available in the IES Application Submission Guide at:

https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/FY2023_submission_guide.pdf.

3. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Requirements concerning the content of an application are contained in the RFA for the specific competition. The forms that must be submitted are in the application package for the specific competition.

4. Submission Dates and Times: The deadline date for transmittal of applications for each competition is indicated in the chart at the end of this notice and in the RFAs for the competitions.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

5. Intergovernmental Review: These competitions are not subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79.

6. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: For all of its grant competitions, IES uses selection criteria based on a peer review process that has been approved by the National Board for Education Sciences. The Peer Review Procedures for Grant Applications can be found on the IES website at https://ies.ed.gov/director/sro/peer_review/application_review.asp.

For the 84.305N competition, peer reviewers of the Research Teams applications to the Digital Learning Platforms Network will be asked to evaluate the significance of the application, the quality of the research plan, the qualifications and experience of the personnel, the resources of the applicant to support the proposed activities, and the quality of the dissemination history and dissemination plan. These criteria will be described in greater detail in the RFA.

For the 84.324C competition, peer reviewers for the special education research and development centers program will be asked to evaluate the significance of the

application, the quality of the research plan, the quality of the national leadership plan, the qualifications and experience of the personnel, and the resources of the applicant to support the proposed activities. These criteria are described in greater detail in the RFA.

For all IES competitions, applications must include budgets no higher than the relevant maximum award as set out in the relevant RFA. IES will not make an award exceeding the maximum award amount as set out in the relevant RFA.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, IES may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, compliance with the IES policy regarding public access to research, and compliance with grant conditions. IES may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, IES requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial

assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.206, before awarding grants under these competitions, the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 200.208, IES may impose specific conditions and, under 2 CFR 3474.10, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

4. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under these competitions to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), under 2 CFR 200.206(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information

about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

5. In General: In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department will review and consider applications for funding pursuant to this notice inviting applications in accordance with:

(a) Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR 200.205);

(b) Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115-232) (2 CFR 200.216);

(c) Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR 200.322); and

(d) Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR 200.340).

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your

approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Grant Administration: Applicants should budget for an annual meeting of up to three days for project directors to be held in Washington, DC.

4. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under one of the competitions announced in this notice, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by IES. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by IES under 34 CFR 75.118. IES may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

5. Performance Measures: To evaluate the overall success of its education research and special education research grant programs, IES annually assesses the percentage of projects that result in peer-reviewed

publications and the number of IES-supported interventions with evidence of efficacy in improving learner education outcomes. In addition, NCSEER annually assesses the number of newly developed or modified interventions with evidence of promise for improving learner education outcomes.

School readiness outcomes include pre-reading, reading, pre-writing, early mathematics, early science, and social-emotional skills that prepare young children for school.

Student academic outcomes include learning and achievement in academic content areas, such as reading, writing, math, and science, as well as outcomes that reflect students' successful progression through the education system, such as course and grade completion; high school graduation; and postsecondary enrollment, progress, and completion. Social and behavioral competencies include social and emotional skills, attitudes, and behaviors that are important to academic and post-academic success. Employment and earnings outcomes include hours of employment, job stability, and wages and benefits, and may be measured in addition to student academic outcomes. Additional education outcomes for students with or at risk of a disability (as defined in the relevant RFA) include developmental outcomes for infants and toddlers (birth to age three) pertaining to cognitive, communicative, linguistic, social, emotional, adaptive, functional, or physical development; developmental and functional outcomes

that improve education outcomes, transition to employment, independent living, and postsecondary education; and employment and earning outcomes for students with disabilities.

6. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, IES considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; whether a grantee is in compliance with the IES policy regarding public access to research; and if IES has established performance measurement requirements, whether the grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, IES also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: On request to the relevant program contact person listed in the chart at the end of this notice, as well as in the relevant RFA and application

package, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the RFA in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc, or other accessible format.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations at www.govinfo.gov. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the *Federal Register*, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the *Federal Register* by using the article search feature at www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Mark Schneider,
Director,
Institute of Education Sciences.

ALN and Name	Applicati on Package Available	Deadline for Transmit tal of Applicat ions	Estimated Range of Awards*	Project Period	For Further Information Contact
National Center for Education Research (NCER)					
84.305N Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Learning Platform Network Research Teams. 	October 20, 2022	February 23, 2023	\$80,000 to \$200,000	Up to 2 years	Erin Higgins Erin.Higgins@ed.gov (202) 987-1531
National Center for Special Education Research (NCSEER)					
84.324C Special Education Research and Development Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Students with Disabilities in Postsecondary Education (Postsecondary Center) 	September 30, 2022	January 12, 2023	\$500,000 to \$1,000,000	Up to 5 years	Akilah Nelson Akilah.Nelson@ed.gov (202) 245-7352

*These estimates are annual amounts.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Note: If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability and wish to access telecommunications relay services, please dial 7-1-1.